



Texas Department of State
Health Services

Texas Expands Aerial Fight against Mosquitoes

News Release

September 13, 2017

Flights begin in Harris County Thursday

The Texas Department of State Health Services is expanding its effort to control mosquitoes after Hurricane Harvey and will begin aerial mosquito spraying over Harris County Thursday night.

Aerial mosquito control by state contractor Clarke and the U.S. Air Force Reserve requested through FEMA started last week. They have been working in areas prioritized based on when assistance was requested and data collected on the number of mosquitoes present. Texas has already treated more than 2 million acres in Aransas, Bee, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, DeWitt, Jackson, Jefferson, Lavaca, Nueces, Orange, Refugio and San Patricio counties. Harris County is set to begin Thursday evening.

DSHS is working in coordination with counties that have requested mosquito control assistance to prevent mosquitoes from interrupting recovery efforts and to reduce the threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

To respond to additional requests, DSHS has activated a contract with Vector Disease Control International to supplement the efforts already underway. VDCI, a private company that specializes in mosquito control, is expected to begin flights over Hardin County on Thursday before moving on to Wharton, Austin and Waller counties.

A third C-130 from the Air Force Reserve's 910th Airlift Wing will be flying in support of Texas' spraying operation beginning tonight. Those crews will primarily be spraying over Brazoria County tonight, adding portions of Harris County Thursday and expanding to Montgomery and Liberty counties in the coming nights.

Aerial application of insecticide, when applied according to label instructions by a licensed professional, is the most effective way to rapidly reduce the number of mosquitoes in a large area and does not present a risk to people, pets or other animals. Spraying is done between dusk and dawn when most mosquitoes are more active and to limit the impact on beneficial insects like honeybees.

A small amount of insecticide, one to two tablespoons per acre, is dispersed by airplanes equipped with nozzles that create ultra-low volume droplets just the right size to kill mosquitoes. The tiny droplets are calibrated to float in the air and kill adult mosquitoes on contact while limiting exposure to other animals and people. Droplets quickly break down in sunlight and water.

People can help control mosquitoes during the recovery effort by dumping out standing water around their homes and businesses and applying a commercially available larvicide in water that can't be drained. People should also avoid mosquito bites by using an EPA-registered mosquito repellent every time they go outside and making sure their window and door screens are in good repair after the storm to keep mosquitoes out of homes.

More information about aerial spraying is available at [Texas to Conduct Aerial Mosquito Control in Wake of Hurricane Harvey](#) and [Questions about Aerial Mosquito Control](#).

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